

Is There Consumption Convergence In An Information Society?ⁱ **A Preliminary Survey on Comparing Traditional and Digital Divide Between Two Cities**

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ABSTRACT

This article explores the consumption disparities between students in two cities. It wants to know the respond of students in two cities toward the media convergence. The cities are Jakarta and Wonosari Yogyakarta. Jakarta symbolize the city that provide abundant media channel and the other hand Wonosari represent the city that lack of media channel. By using student's expenditure on traditional and digital expenditure, there are two conclusions temporarily. First, there is consumption disparities between two cities on traditional information. Second, it seems there is no digital divide between two cities.

Keywords: consumption disparities, digital divide, information expenditure.

INTRODUCTION

The proliferation of digital devices in Indonesia is deeper and wider. Even though comparing with developed countries, the digital penetration is lower, they grow stronger and stronger year to year. Based on Indonesia current data in Kemp (2016), there are 72,7 million active internet users (penetration level 28%), 74 million active social media user (penetration level 29%). The data show us that digital devices become more common. Mobile phones and internet ownership grow significantly. In 2000, less than 10% of Indonesian people had a mobile phone. The ownership of mobile phone grows about 20% per year in 15 years. For Indonesia as a highly populated people, this growth means so big number of mobile phones.

The expanding use of digital devices changed the nature of consumption (Attawell, 2001). Internet and mobile phone reshaped everyday life. They change the structure of individual's time use. Enjoying

magazines or all the forms of print media become less to do. It is replaced by browsing internet and chatting via social media. Enjoying digital media is becoming the best option of spending free times. The consumption of traditional media is diminishing. The time spent on traditional media diminished. It is not just diminishing but also diversifying daily life used.

The digital technology opens more possibilities. It can assimilate the content of traditional media before. The information, entertainment and communication can be transformed in digital format and shared with digital technologies such as internet. This convergence constructed in one devices, in mobile phones and afterward directed people to buy. By using mobile phone, people can get information, entertainments and communication like they do before with traditional media. The technology convergence makes their life simpler. Many traditional forms of information and entertainment can be assimilated with it. Some newspaper, books,

film and music can be published on internet and can buy in digitally format such as pdf, MP4 and MP3. So, the intention to buy mobile phones increase dramatically in Indonesia. In the other hands, there is a trend of decreasing time spent on traditional media. The expenditure of buying books, newspaper and magazines decreased time to time.

The massive digital proliferation in Indonesia generate some questions about their impact. The main question is the impact of digital usage proliferation to information consumption. Specifically, there two questions will be elaborated. First, are there information consumption disparities between people. Second, are there digital divide between people regarding digital proliferation in Indonesia?

LITERATURE REVIEW

It is acknowledged social factors affect consumer behavior (Katz-Gerro, 2002). Social scientists point the significant influence of social structure to marketing. Social factors consist of culture and social structure. Culture is the complex of values and ideas that allows humans to interpret as members of society. Culture are transmitted from one community to another, from generation to another. Individuals learn culture through socialization and acculturation. For marketing, culture provide understanding about how products are used regarding their function, form and meaning. Cultures also provide valences for product and defines the ideology of consumption (Katz-Gerro, 2002).

Social structure traditionally divided into several groups. It can be divided based

on income, social and economic status, education, etc. Social structure are relatively permanent and homogenous groupings of people in society, permitting them to be compared with one another. For marketing, social structure provide understanding about human behavior regarding to their interaction, possessions and value orientations. It also means that social structure determines human expenditure for their life.

In term of information consumption, social structure determines and shape human behavior on information (Wilska, 2003). Then, it is assumed the different culture and social structure imply the different human behavior on information consumption. Recent studies have shown that information consumption connected with the variation of social structure such as social and economic status, level of education, and level of income. The differences of information consumption attached to the variation of social structure are called as digital divides. As an example, In Finland, the digital divides exist. There are differences information consumer behavior and expenditure between social class. The highly educated and the rich people spent more money in purchasing smartphones and internet than the low educated and the rich one.

At the beginning, internet and smartphones have a symbolic value (DiMaggio, Harrigta, Neuman, Robinson, 2001). Their existences symbolize social distinction. Only the rich can afford the internet. Then internet was usually connected with higher social class. When the popularity of internet and smartphone are becoming common, the price of internet and

smartphone was gradually lower-and lower. Internet and smartphone are no longer as conspicuous commodities. People usually use internet and smartphone in privately and do not show outside. The differences of information consumption depend on the differences of expenditure.

It is obscured to link information consumption with social structure. The advance of technology deconstructs the border between stratum. Technology brings democratization to people, open access for people no matter where they come from. They use and communicate with the same technologies. Technology redefine the relationship between social structure and consumption (Coleman, 1983).

Despite that, it is possible to frame the differences of consumption between social groups based on the time of product acquisition (Wilska, 2003). The higher educated and more affluent people can adopt product easier than the lower educated and less affluent people. Information consumption need the readiness of mental and economic resources. It spreads more effective and easily for the higher ones than the lower ones to do. The higher ones adopt faster and easier than the lower ones. The digital divide then exists because of the differences of resources availability.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research used student's expenditure data from two cities, Jakarta and Wonosari. Though the gap between cities in Indonesia are narrower, the differences between cities still exist. Jakarta is the megacity. Jakarta provides its citizen with many modern infrastructures. The consumption of Jakarta citizen is linked with

the modern infrastructure. All the form of digital devices and traditional information are available here. In the other hand, Wonosari is a typical modest city. It is a small city that provide modern infrastructure in modest and limited scope. There is no superhighway internet. Traditional information is not so varied and complete likes in Jakarta. They are different in social and economic life.

The data used in this analysis is based on student's expenditures survey on information consumption. It is common to use expenditure as a proxy for consumer behavior. The more active consumers usually spend more money and the spare budget plan higher than the less ones. The active consumers consume much and various commodities including information commodities. The higher educated and affluent people seems consume more. The population of high and affluent citizen in Jakarta are higher than in Wonosari. So, it can be assumed that there are consumption disparities between Jakarta and Wonosari.

This research employs convenience sampling to collect data. Convenience sampling attempts to obtain a sample of convenient elements. The selection of sampling units is left primarily to the interviewer. We interviewed the respondents we met and fit with our research goal. Respondents were asked about the amounts their monthly expenditure for information need. There are two kinds of information consumption i.e. traditional information and digital information. The form of traditional information consists of books, newspaper and magazines. Whereas the form of digital information included internet and multimedia. The analysis didn't include the

buying cost to acquire television, smartphones, etc. By analyzing the routine expenditure, we know one of many aspects of their consumption behavior especially in information consumption. This consideration enabled comparable measures for the analysis of recurrent consumption on different categories of information.

At first, we collected descriptive data. After that, the MANOVA test was used to test statistical differences between dependent variables and independent variables. The dependent variables are traditional information and digital information. The independent variables consisted of level of education and level of economic. Level of education treated as a class and status based measure. There are four educational level we used, i.e.: intermediate and academic. The higher level of education seems the higher social and the more enlighten people. The more enlighten people assumed being easier to adapt with new technology especially with internet. The economic level measured the disposable income of household. This variable provided a rough measure of the economic

background of the household. Because the respondents are students then the amount of pocket money is assumed as a disposable income. Economic variable categorized into quintiles level.

Data collection was applied in two cities, Wonosari and Jakarta. Wonosari was chosen to be represented the small city that associated with lower level education and less affluent population. In the other hand, Jakarta was represented as a big city with abundant high-level education and wealthy inhabitants. Although there are differences between Wonosari and Jakarta, they have similarity as a cyber city. Superhighway internet (4G network) have already implemented in Wonosari. So, theoretically Wonosari is having similar digital readiness with Jakarta. Total respondents we get are 200 people. They consisted of 80 people from Wonosari and 120 people from Jakarta.

The result of data analysis presented in Table 1. Table 1 contain the mean of information expenditure and the results of MANOVA test

Table 1
MANOVA Model for Information Consumption

Sources of Variation	N Wonosari	Traditional Information Wonosari	Digital Information Wonosari	N Jakarta	Traditional Information Jakarta	Digital Information Jakarta
Level of Education		F= 17,3***	F= 29,9***		F=14,2***	F=10,4***
• Intermediate	45	-104,2	138,7***	80	245,2***	264,6***
• academic	35	-245,1	251,4***	40	321,3***	367,8***
Level of Economic		F=14,1***	F=12,2***		F=62,5***	67,7***
• <250k rupiah	48	-178,9***	124,5***	40	211,2***	245,2***
• 250-500k rupiah	32	-275,2***	325,2***	45	263,2***	370,5***
• 500-750k rupiah	0			35	325,3***	402,7***
• >750k rupiah	0			0		
***=p< 0,01						

DISCUSSION

Based on this Table 1, we can know the results of MANOVA test for Wonosari data. The findings show level of education and level of economic influences traditional and digital information consumption. There are different effects on traditional information consumption and digital information consumption. The people come from all background, from all level of education and economic level spend less money for traditional information consumption but digital information consumption.

Table 1 also show that Jakarta data has the different story with Wonosari data. Based on Jakarta data, we conclude that the people spend more money for traditional information consumption and digital information consumption. There are differences and similarities between cities on information consumption. They are different on traditional information consumption and similar on digital consumption. The people of Wonosari from all of background spend less on traditional information consumption than Jakarta. It happened because of several reasons. First, compared with Jakarta, Wonosari is lack of print media availability such as magazines, newspaper and books. Second, moreover, the media literacy seems low. The oral communication is dominant. They prefer to chat to each other. It is not polite spending time by reading books or magazine by yourself. Third, the advancement of digital technology provided people to read by using their smartphones. Traditional information can be accessed by digital devices. It is no longer buying magazines or newspaper if we can access them by smartphones. They did not need in depth information from newspaper. If they want to deepen the

information, they can get from their relatives, peers or other people. Thus, word of mouth is matters as a form of social communication.

Jakarta is different from Wonosari on traditional information consumption. Traditional information is still matter in Jakarta because of several reasons too. First, media literacy in Jakarta is rather high. The people need to deepen the information by reading newspaper. They need more news from online short news. So, they need another source of information. They get in depth information from books, newspaper or magazines. Second, almost of all print media being sold in Jakarta. All the prominent media based in Jakarta. So, the availability of traditional information is abundant.

Wonosari and Jakarta have similarities on digital media consumption. There is an increasing trend of using digital devices all over Indonesia. Based on findings, people spend money more on digital information consumption. These findings confirmed that there is no digital divide between small city and megacity in Java island. Expenditure on digital information consumption has not polarized by educational level and economic level. The findings showed that the digital technologies are apparently available to practically everyone their use displays growing similarities by education and economic level. The differences of educational and economic level do not correspond to the general assumptions of forming differences between people in digital information consumption. The advancement of digital technologies moreover reinforces traditional divides in consumption (Rasanen, 2006). Digital

devices had already opened the border between social status. The border is become blurring. The consumption of information technology is no longer mark of social status. The digital divide between social group slow but sure will be last.

The conclusion presented in these articles are restricted with the circumstances with this research. Based on temporary results, we have already known that digital technologies have blurred the border between social groups. The digital information consumption lasted the digital divide. Then there is tendency of making information consumption convergence by digital technologies.

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